

# The "NET"

## BUSINESS WATCH

### SHOPLIFTING

A person commits the crime of theft by shoplifting when he/she, with the intent of taking merchandise for his/her own use, does so without paying for the item in whole or in part by doing any of the following:

- Conceals or takes possession of the goods or merchandise;
- Transfers merchandise from one container to another
- Alters the price tag or other marking;
- Interchanges the label or price tag from one item of merchandise with the label or price tag from another item of merchandise.

### PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

- Be alert when groups enter the store and do not tolerate loitering.
- Have adequate sales help during peak times.
- Plan your sales floor layout. Do not put popular and high priced items near exits.
- Keep dressing rooms secured and limit the number of items allowed in. Check rooms often for discarded tags and hangers.
- Know your sales floor and which areas are hard to see. Know where your mirrors or cameras are located.
- Never leave a department unattended.
- Be aware of the available stock and keep shelves neat and orderly. "Front" small items after every sale.
- Make contact with every shopper that enters your store. Acknowledge they are there by saying "Can I help you?" or "If you need anything I'll be right here."
- Arrange your store for maximum observation.
- Be alert of any customer who loiters or appears nervous. Rely on your "Sixth sense" if something does not seem right.

### SHOPLIFTING METHODS

- Concealment: Most times shoplifters will conceal an item. They will place it in any pocket, underneath clothing or inside baggage.

- Palming: Small items can be placed in the hand and concealed there.
- Ticket Switching : Price tag of a lower priced item is exchanged with the more expensive one.
- Wear-over method: A person takes several items into a dressing room and wears them out under their original clothing.
- Hidden Merchandise: Smaller, more expensive, items are placed inside a larger item.
- Damage-Repair-Return: Customers will damage a new item, remove the price tags, and then take it to customer service to get a refund in cash.
- Tag-Team: One person, or a group, will create a distraction causing employees to focus on them while an accomplice does the shoplifting.
- Stun and Run: The shoplifter will enter the store, grab an item, and then run out the exit. Some will just walk out hoping that no one will stop or confront them.

### HAVE A PLAN

Put an alert system into operation. If a shoplifter is spotted by an employee a team effort by trained personnel can prevent a loss. Here are some ideas for establishing an alert system:

- The employee who first observes the shoplifter should keep them under constant observation.
- The same employee should alert other employees as soon and discreetly as possible.
- A second employee should then alert the manager and other employees as may be needed.
- The employee should follow and make contact as soon as possible.
- Another employee inside the store should telephone the police so there are officers in route.
- The shoplifter should be taken to an office and at least two employees continue observation until police arrive.
- If the shoplifter is cooperating, the employee can call the non-emergency number: 441-6000
- If there is a problem - a struggle ensues or the shoplifter runs—the employee can call 911.

*Continued on page 2*

**Year to Date Statistics****1/1/04 to 8/31/04****Robbery**

NW - 1

NE - 7

CE - 8

SW - 7

SE - 5

**Commercial Burglary**

NW - 64/12

NE - 75/6

CE - 72/9

SW - 45/7

SE - 83/8

**Forgery**

NW - 270/168

NE - 229/155

CE - 91/50

SW - 166/103

SE - 276/150

**Shoplifting**

NW - 222/169

NE - 301/236

CE - 65/35

SW - 199/166

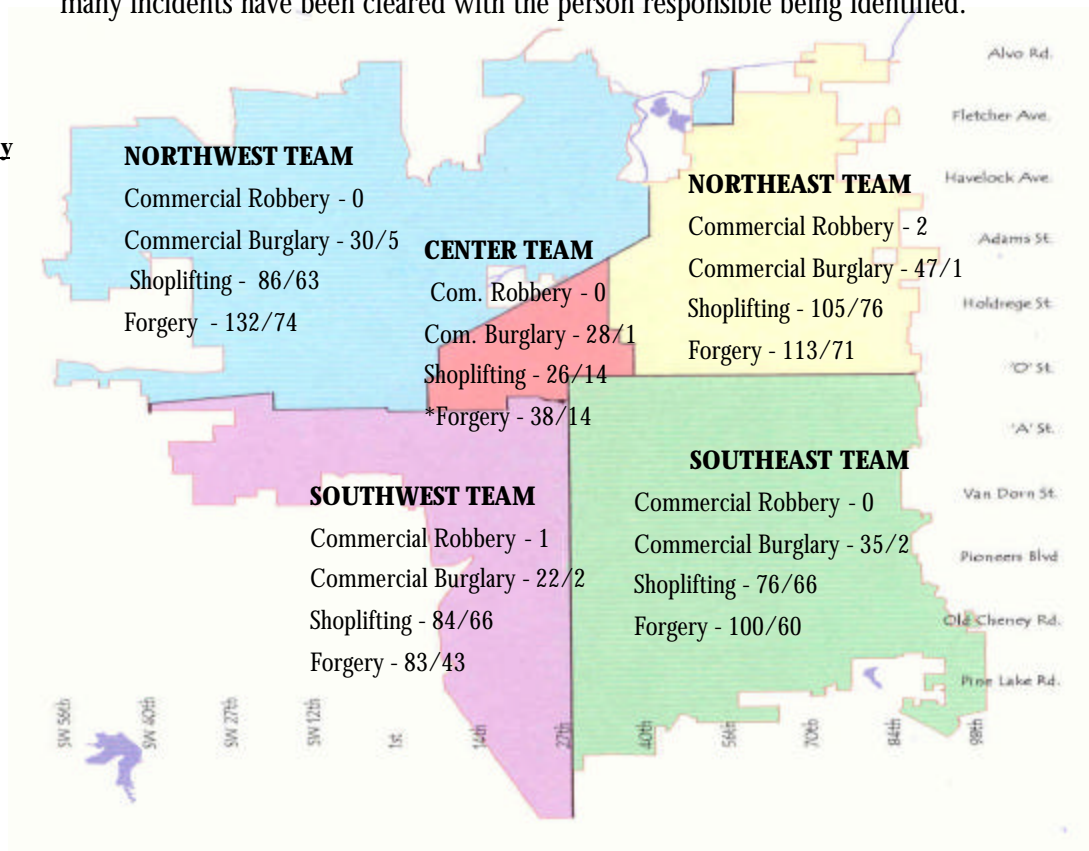
SE - 191/160

**CRIME TRENDS**

From 6-1-2004 to 8-31-2004

For more information about the crime trends in your neighborhood go to the city web site.  
<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/police>

The first number will be the number of reported incidents. The second number is how many incidents have been cleared with the person responsible being identified.

***Shoplifting continued from page 1***

It is important to have some sort of documentation about the incident. This should include: Name, address and date of birth; a description of what happened; items taken and the retail value; the police officers name and case number. Complete the incident by banning the person from the store. The police officer will conduct the investigation, issue a citation or take the person into custody. Keep the paper work you complete for your use as it may be six months to a year before you are called to court.

**WHAT TO DO WHEN IT HAPPENS**

- Know what merchandise was taken, where it was taken from and how much was taken.
- Keep the suspect in sight past the last point of payment and as they exit the store. This ensures that they do not throw the item away if they become scared.
- Remember—you must be sure that something has been stolen. If you just think something was stolen there will not be enough probable cause for the police to make an arrest.
- Do not approach the shoplifter until after they have passed the last point of payment.
- If possible contact should be made with at least two employees.
- If the shoplifter is a female, one of the contacting employees should also be female.
- Do not be accusing. Avoid words such as "steal," "stolen," or "arrest." Make statements such as "I think there has been a mistake." Have you forgotten to pay for something?" or, "Please come with me to work things out."

**SAFETY FIRST- NO AMOUNT OF STOLEN MERCHANDISE IS WORTH THE RISK OF INJURY**

## ***Sorry, You Haven't Won the Canadian Lottery***

If you have received a post card, phone call or an e-mail telling you that your financial troubles are over because you have just won a million dollar lottery, don't quit your day job. You have just joined a large group of potential victims to a very active scam. The way it works is that you will be notified you have won a Canadian Lottery and will be mailed a check that you are to deposit in your account. Once the deposit is made you are to wire back just enough money to pay the taxes on your winnings. The alleged lottery official will tell you that the money you are wiring back to them allows them to release your winnings to you. Not long after you wire the money to the lottery official you will find that the check you received from them is a counterfeit. The fact that victims in these cases wired money to these con-artists makes it very difficult to recover any of the loss.



The following are some of the red flags that should help you avoid falling prey to this scam: The first one being that you have won a lottery from another country. Nebraska State Statute 29-1101 says that a person advances gambling activity if they engage in the procurement, sale, or offering for sale or interest in a lottery of another state or government. So, if you have just been told that you have won the Nigerian, Spanish or Canadian lottery, there is no legal way a Nebraska resident could have entered it to start with. The second is the request to wire the money back to the alleged lottery official. This is a common means of operation for a number of con games because the scam artist gets the money before the victim has a chance to realize they have been taken.

As long as we are picking on the Canadians, there is another scam coming out of Canada. This one involves the sale of an item on the internet in which a buyer from Canada purchases the item and then mails the seller a check for a great deal more than the agreed purchase price. The buyer will then request that the seller deposit the check and mail or wire them a check for the difference. After sending back the check for the overage the victim finds the check they deposited was a counterfeit. Not only is the seller out the merchandise, if they shipped it, but they are also out the money sent back to the alleged buyer. When dealing on the internet it is a good idea to use an escrow account if possible. Keep in mind that the checks being sent are not just forged checks, but counterfeit checks, and it may take a while to determine if they are valid.

These current scams are coming out of Canada but in the past these scams and con games similar to them have come out of a number of different countries.

### **LINCOLN POLICE CITIZEN ACADEMY**

Did you ever wonder what it was like to respond to a crime in progress? Arrest a drunk driver? Search a dark room for criminals?

Well here is your chance. The Lincoln Police Department has been giving citizens an inside look into these and many other questions in a program called "The Citizen Academy." Since 1989 over 500 citizens, just like you, have had this opportunity. The Citizen Academy is held twice a year, in the spring and fall. It consists of classroom presentations and hands on instruction, all of which are designed to increase your knowledge of the Lincoln Police Department. It is a nine week program that meets from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Thursdays evenings. Once you have completed the academy, a graduation ceremony is held in conjunction with the Lincoln Police Department awards ceremony.



***Academy students learning about RADAR.***

Participants must meet the following criteria: Live or work in the City of Lincoln; be 18 years of age or older; have no felony or serious misdemeanor arrests; and, be willing to commit to the nine week program.

If you are interested in participating in the Citizen Academy you can register on-line at:

**[www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/police/citacad.htm](http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/police/citacad.htm)**

Or you can call the Crime Prevention Group, at **441-7261**, for additional information or an application.

## THE "NET" BUSINESS WATCH

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT

CRIME PREVENTION GROUP

575 S. 10TH St.

Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

*Return Service*

### BOO AT THE ZOO

Come see us at the zoo for a safe and fun environment to trick or treat. Boo at the Zoo is the Folsom Children's Zoo & Botanical Gardens annual fundraiser to help feed the animals during the winter months when the zoo is closed.

WHEN: Tuesday October 26 thru Saturday October 30th

TIME: 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

ADMISSION: \$3.00 for non members, no cost for families with current Children's Zoo memberships. However everyone that will be trick & treating will have to purchase an official KLKN treat bag for \$3.00. You can also ride the train for an additional \$1.50.

PARKING: at the Zoo (if you get there early). A FREE Star Tran Shuttle will be provided from the following parking lots:

Stinson's Ace Hardware—945 S. 27th

Ideal Grocery—905 S. 27th

Antelope Park—North parking Lot

Lincoln High School—North parking lot



### Santa Cop Auction

Santa Cop is a program created by Lincoln Police Officers in 1980. Officers witnessed a need in our community for less privileged children to be able to experience a giving holiday season. Santa Cop relies on donations and on money obtained by fund raising activities. The money is used to purchase brand new toys for local children. One of the fund raisers is the annual Santa Cop Auction. Starting at 11:00 a.m. there is a silent auction of numerous products displayed on tables. After the silent auction is complete a live auction begins with Col. Jan Kaufman calling the sales. If you have anything you would like to donate for the auction it would be greatly appreciated. You can send an e-mail to: [santa@santacop.org](mailto:santa@santacop.org).

This year's Santa Cop Auction will be held on November 20th, beginning at 11:00 a.m., at the State Fair Grounds Lancaster Building. Please come and support this local charity that gives back 100% to our community.

**See us at: [www.santacop.org](http://www.santacop.org)**